

Message Text

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ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 EA-10 NEA-10 ISO-00 IO-13 CIAE-00 DODE-00
PM-05 H-01 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01
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R 101254Z APR 78
FM AMEMBASSY GABORONE
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1970
INFO AMCONSUL CAPETOWN
AMEMBASSY KABUL
AMEMBASSY MAPUTO
AMEMBASSY NAIROBI
AMEMBASSY PRETORIA
AMEMBASSY SEOUL
USMISSION USUN

C O N F I D E N T I A L GABORONE 0980

CAPE TOWN FOR EMBASSY

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PDEV, BC, KN, KS
SUBJECT: KOREA: VISIT BY ROK AMBASSADOR DO SOON CHUNG

REF: STATE 60433

1. ROK AMBASSADOR RESIDENT IN NAIROBI DO SOON CHUNG, WHO IS ALSO ACCREDITED TO BOTSWANA, VISITED EMBASSY MARCH 30 TO BRIEF ME AND IRO ON HIS VISIT TO BOTSWANA. CHUNG SAID ROK BELIEVES NORTH KOREANS MIGHT APPLY FOR OBSERVER STATUS AT UPCOMING KABUL NAMCC MEETING AND PRESS FOR RENEWED NAM CONSIDERATION OF KOREAN QUESTION. THIS WAS THE PRIORITY ITEM ON THE AGENDA FOR HIS TALKS HERE.

2. IN VIEW OF BOTSWANA'S POSITION AS MEMBER OF NAMCC, CHUNG CALLED ON MINEXTAFF MOGWE MARCH 29 TO REQUEST GOB'S ASSISTANCE IN KEEPING KOREAN ISSUE OFF NAMCC'S KABUL AGENDA. ROK HAS INVITED MOGWE TO VISIT KOREA (WITH MRS. MOGWE) FOR FIVE DAYS PRIOR TO KABUL MEETING IN MAY. ACCORDING TO CHUNG, MOGWE EXPRESSED BOTSWANA'S UNDERSTANDING OF ROK POSITION BUT MADE NO COMMITMENT CONCERNING BOTSWANA'S POSITION SHOULD NORTH KOREAN REQUEST BE TABLED BY OTHER NAMCC STATES. IN CHUNG'S OPINION, GOB WOULD

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TANCE IN KEEPING KOREAN ISSUE OFF NAMCC'S KABUL AGENDA. ROK HAS INVITED MOGWE TO VISIT KOREA (WITH MRS. MOGWE) FOR FIVE DAYS PRIOR TO KABUL MEETING IN MAY. ACCORDING TO CHUNG, MOGWE EXPRESSED BOTSWANA'S UNDERSTANDING OF ROK POSITION BUT MADE NO COMMITMENT CONCERNING BOTSWANA'S POSITION SHOULD NORTH KOREAN REQUEST BE TABLED BY OTHER NAMCC STATES. IN CHUNG'S OPINION, GOB WOULD

NOT PROMOTE NAMCC CONSIDERATION OF KOREAN ISSUE, BUT IF ISSUE IS RAISED BY OTHERS, BOTSWANA IS UNLIKELY TO ACTIVELY OPPOSE NORTH KOREAN INITIATIVE.

3. ACCORDING TO CHUNG, DPRK VICE PRIME MINISTER RECENTLY VISITED TANZANIA, MOZAMBIQUE AND ZAMBIA IN ORDER TO DRUM UP SUPPORT FOR NORTH KOREA AMONG MORE RADICAL AFRICAN STATES. CHUNG HAD NO INDICATION NORTH KOREANS WOULD VISIT BLS COUNTRIES IN THEIR REPORTED DRIVE TO ARRANGE NAMCC CONSIDERATION OF KOREAN QUESTION. REFLECTING ON THE EFFORTS OF ROK AND DPRK IN AFRICA, CHUNG COMMENTED THAT NORTH KOREAN PROPAGANDA HAS BEEN VERY EFFECTIVE. NORTH KOREANS HAVE, IN MANY CASES, SUCCEEDED IN THEIR EFFORTS TO PORTRAY ROK AS U.S. PUPPET, THEREBY PUTTING ROK DIPLOMATS ON DEFENSIVE.

4. CHUNG TOLD US THAT ROK DIPLOMATIC EFFORTS IN AFRICA ARE ALSO COMPLICATED BY SOUTH KOREAN ECONOMIC RELATIONSHIP WITH SOUTH AFRICA WHICH DPRK BY WHISPERING CAMPAIGN IS SEEKING TO USE TO DISCREDIT ROK. HE CITED EXAMPLE OF 200 SOUTH KOREAN WELDERS WORKING FOR FLUOR COMPANY ON PROJECT TO BUILD CALTEX REFINERY IN CAPE TOWN. ACCORDING TO CHUNG, FLUOR HAS REQUESTED SOUTH KOREANS STAY ON TO WORK ON OTHER PROJECTS AFTER COMPLETION OF THE REFINERY, BUT ROK HAS DECIDED TO WITHDRAW THEM TO AVOID GIVING DPRK GROUNDS FOR FURTHER ANTI-ROK PROP-
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AGANDA.

5. COMMENT: WE SHARE CHUNG'S ASSESSMENT THAT GOB WILL NOT SPONSOR BUT WOULD NOT OPPOSE NAMCC CONSIDERATION OF KOREAN QUESTION. WEARE AWARE OF NO RECENT DPRK APPROACHES TO GOB ON KOREAN QUESTION. ROK INVITATION TO MOGWE (AND HIS WIFE) IS AN ASTUTE MOVE. MOGWE DOES NOT CONCEAL HIS BELIEF THAT PRESENCE OF LARGE NUMBERS OF U.S. TROOPS IN KOREA SOMEHOW DIMINISHES ROK INDEPENDENCE. IT WOULD BE GOOD INVESTMENT OF TIME AND EFFORT IF EMBASSY SEOUL COULD TALK TO MOGWE DURING HIS VISIT AND REINFORCE OUR POSITION ON TROOP PRESENCE.
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